Modernisation and expansion of Gopalpur minor port, Orissa

1536. SHRI RAHASBIHARI BARIK: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether MMTC proposes to take up the upgradation and expansion of Gopalpur minor port in Orissa;

(b) whether MMTC has made any agreement with his Ministry to develop that minor part as a major port;

(c) what steps are being taken to develop that port as a major port; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) and (b) No such proposal has been received by this Ministry.

(c) and (d) Do not arise.

New Postal Services Policy

1537. SHRI VIRENDRA KATARIA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering any new postal services policy to achieve greater customer satisfaction; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) and (b) The Department of Post has consistent followed the policy of providing postal services in the country comprising efficient service to the customers across the counter as also expeditious mail processing and delivery. While counter services are provided through a steady expansion of the network of post offices, improvement in mail processing and delivery is effected through rationalisation of procedures, adoption of suitably speedy transport system, induction of technology and better management.

Continuing this basic policy, new initiatives have now been taken to achieve greater customer satisfaction through more efficient, error-free and responsive counter service through use of computer based multi-purpose counter machines, better ergonomics and improved work environment. This programme is also aimed at enhancing employee satisfaction by providing a clean and friendly work environment and enabling the department to provide new value-added services to meet the future expectations of the customers. In the area of expeditious mail processing and delivery, the programme of modernisation is aimed at providing exclusive channels for processing and delivery of large volumes of pin-coded first class mail between the National Capital and other metro cities and State Capitals of the country. Such segmented processing of mail is expected to decongest the system and allow it to function smoothly to the benefit of different types of users of Postal services.

The Department has also initiated schemes to provide value-added services based on satellite connectivity. Transmission of Money Orders using satellite and the introduction of Hybride Mail Service are two such schemes. Twenty-six micro earth stations capable of transmitting and receiving satellite signals have already been set up in the country and 49 more centres are targetted to be completed by the end of the current year.

Availability of Environment Funds

1538. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that insurance companies are sitting on the Environment Funds in absence of any guidelines on its implementation;

(b) if so, what is the reaction of Government to the press report in Financial Express dated 21.7.95 under the caption "Environment Fund" stagnating in absence of guideliness;

(c) the details regarding facts on the observations made in the report; and

(d) the action taken so far/proposed to sort out the issues to ensure availability of funds for development purposes?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) Presently, the General Insurance Corporation and its subsidiaries are maintaining the Environment Relief Fund in separate bank